

CLAIMS:

1. A user interface for a display of an electronic device, the user interface including:
a background layer for displaying an interface; and
at least a first animated control element overlaid on the back ground layer, wherein the control element has a plurality of functions associated with it and each of said functions being executable by making a 2D gesture associated with a one of said plurality of functions in a region of the user interface associated with the control element.
2. A user interface as claimed in claim 1, wherein the control element moves over a region of the display.
3. A user interface as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the control element is an icon.
4. A user interface as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the control element is an alphanumeric string.
5. A user interface as claimed in claim 4, wherein the alpha numeric string is a word.
6. A user interface as claimed in claim 5, wherein the word is polysyllabic and the each individual syllable is animated.
7. A user interface as claimed in claims 1 or claim 2, wherein the control element is a button.
8. A user interface as claimed in claim 7, wherein the button bears and indicia indicating a menu of functions associated with the button and wherein making the 2D gesture executes a function from the menu.

9. A user interface as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein a help function is associated with the control element and wherein making a help 2D gesture causes help information relating to the functions associated with the control element to be displayed in the user interface.
10. A user interface as claimed in claim 9, wherein the help 2D gesture has the shape substantially of a question mark.
11. A user interface as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the control element is visually opaque.
12. A user interface as claimed in any of claims 1 to 10, wherein the control element is visually transparent.
13. A user interface as claimed in claim 12, wherein the control element has a transparency of less than substantially 30%.
14. A user interface as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the user interface includes a plurality of animated control elements.
15. A user interface as claimed in claim 14, wherein the first control element is of a first type and a second of the plurality of control elements is of a second type, which is different to the first type.
16. A user interface as claimed in claim 14 or 15, wherein the plurality of control elements between them provide a keyboard.
17. A user interface as claimed in claim 16, wherein the keyboard has a standard layout.

18. A user interface as claimed in claim 16 or 17 wherein the keyboard provides all of the characters in an alphabet of a language.
19. A user interface as claimed in any of claims 16 to 18, wherein at least one of the control elements is associated with a plurality of characters and each of the plurality of characters has a respective 2D gesture associated therewith for causing the character to be displayed on the background layer.
20. A user interface as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the control element has a 2D gesture associated with it for carrying out a formatting function on a character associated with the control element.
21. A user interface as claimed in any of claims 1 to 15, wherein at least one control elements is associated with a plurality of media player functions and each of the media player functions has a respective 2D gesture associated therewith for causing the media player function to be executed.
22. A user interface as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the control element is animated so as to appear like a three dimensional entity.
23. A user interface as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the control element is animated so as to be more readily noticeable by peripheral vision.
24. A user interface as claimed in claim 23, wherein the control element has an axis along which it is animated.
25. A user interface as claimed in claim 24, wherein the control elements animation comprises variable thickness bars scrolling along the axis.
26. An electronic device having a user interface, the electronic device including:
a display device;
a data processing device; and

a memory storing instructions executable by the data processing device to display the user interface on the display, wherein the user interface is as claimed in any preceding claim.

27. A device as claimed in claim 26, wherein the display is a touch sensitive display.

28. A device as claimed in claim 26 or 27, wherein the device further includes a pointer device for making a 2D gesture on the user interface.

29. A device as claimed in any of claims 26 to 28, wherein the device is a handheld device.

30. A device as claimed in any of claims 26 to 29, wherein the device is a wireless telecommunications device.

31. A device as claimed in claim 30, wherein the device is a cellular telecommunications device.

32. A computer implemented method for providing a user interface for a display of an electronic device, comprising:
displaying an interface as a background layer;
displaying an animated control element associated with a plurality of functions over the background layer;
detecting a 2D gesture made over a region of the user interface associated with the control element; and
executing a one of the plurality of functions which is associated with the 2D gesture.

33. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein a plurality of animated control elements are displayed.

34. A method as claimed in claim 32 or 33, wherein the animated control elements are transparent.

35. A method as claimed in any of claims 32 to 34 and wherein detecting the 2D gesture further comprises a gesture engine parsing the 2D gesture and generating a keyboard event corresponding to the 2D gesture.
36. A method as claimed in any of claims 32 to 35, and further comprising determining a location within the display of the 2D gesture and determining whether a control element is associated with the location.
37. A method as claimed in any of claims 32 to 35, and further comprising: determining whether a gesture is intended to activate a control element and if not then determining a function of the background layer to execute.
38. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the 2D gesture is a help 2D gesture and the function associated with the 2D gesture is a help function which displays information relating to the control element.
39. A method as claimed in claim 38, wherein the information relating to the control element includes a graphical indication of the 2D gestures associated with the control element and/or text explaining the functions associated with the 2D control element.
40. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the control element is associated with a menu of functions and wherein the 2D gesture causes a one of the functions from the menu of functions to be executed.
41. A method as claimed in claim 33 wherein the plurality of control elements between them provide a key board and wherein the 2D gesture causes a character selected from the keyboard to be displayed on the background layer.
42. A method as claimed in any of claims 32 to 41 wherein the control element is a character string.

43. A method as claimed in claim 42, wherein the character string is a word.
44. A method as claimed in claim 43, wherein the word is a polysyllabic word and each syllable of the word is separately animated.
45. Computer program code executable by a data processing device to provide the user interface of any of claims 1 to 25 or the computing device of any of claims 26 to 31 or the method of any of claims 32 to 44.
46. A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium bearing computer program code as claimed in claim 45.